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1826.



and Agriculture -
THE CAUSE OF EDUCATION, IN TENNESSEE.

AN

ADDRESS

DELIVERED TO THE YOUNG GENTLEMEN

ADMITTED TO THE DEGREE OF

BACHELOR OF ARTS,

AT THE

FIRST COMMENCEMENT

OF THE

UNIVERSITY OF NASHVILLE,

OCTOBER 4, 1826.

Cause of the Farmer

BY PHILIP LINDSLEY, D. D.

PRESIDENT OF THE UNIVERSITY.

NEW EDITION.

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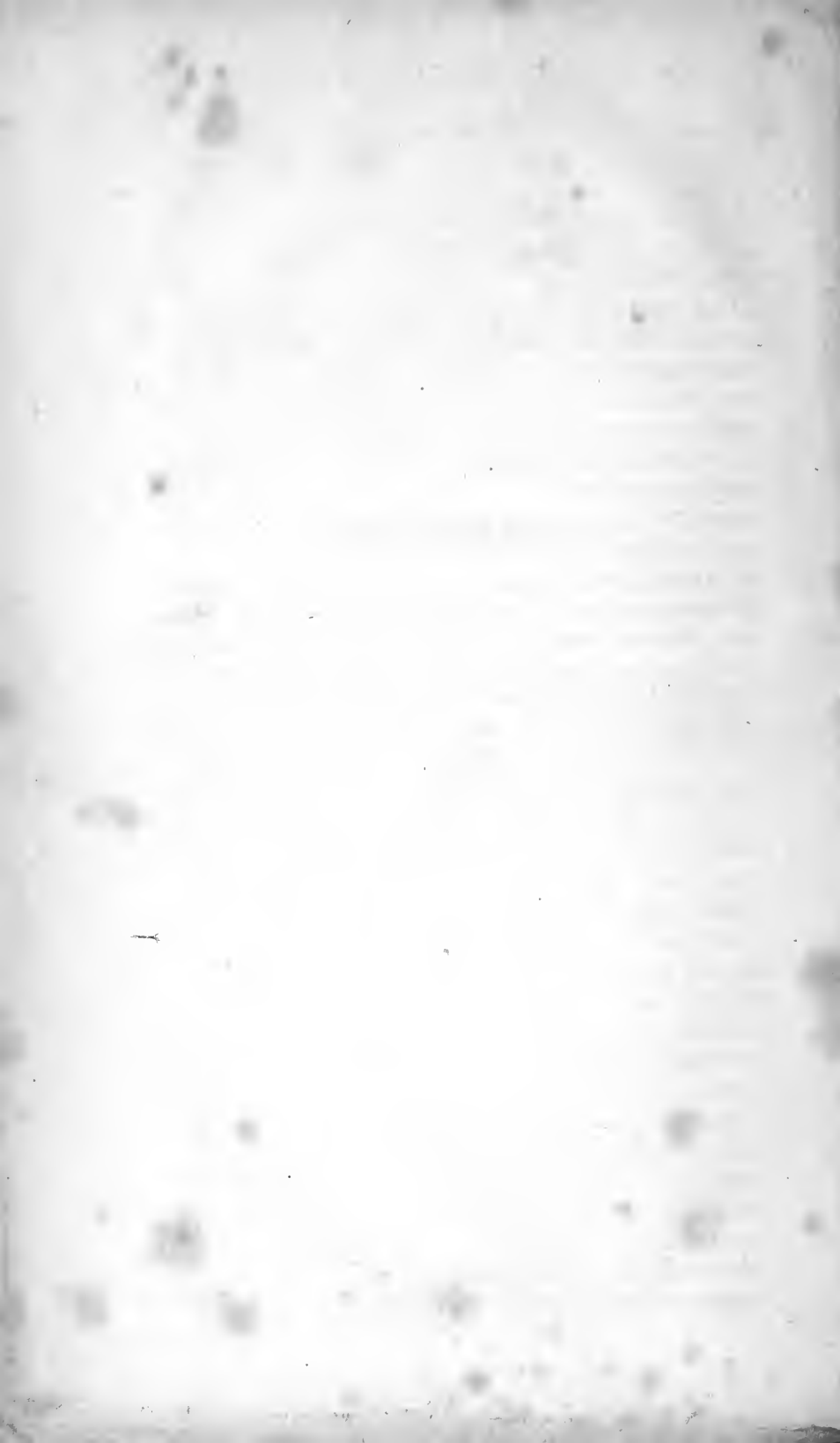
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ADVERTISEMENT.

CUMBERLAND COLLEGE was incorporated in 1806. It was re-organized and put in operation in the autumn of 1824. During the following year, another *Cumberland College* was established at Princeton in Kentucky. To prevent the inconveniences likely to result from this identity of names, the Legislature enacted, in November 1826, that the corporate style of this institution should thenceforward be "The University of Nashville." As this alteration however took place a month after the delivery and first publication of the ensuing address, the ancient name is still retained wherever it was then used, except in the title page.



ADDRESS.

YOUNG GENTLEMEN:

Your academical career is now ended; and you have just received the usual honors and testimonials of this institution. According to the opinion which too generally prevails, you have completed your studies. This, I am persuaded, is not your own opinion. You have already made a juster estimate of your attainments; and of the vast and variegated field for future investigation which still lies before you, and which invites your assiduous cultivation. If you have learned *how* to study, and have acquired a thirst for knowledge, you will continue to study and to learn while you live. This, indeed, is the grand aim and object of all elementary education. It is to discipline the mind, to develop faculty, to mature the judgment, to refine the taste, to chasten the moral sense, to awaken and invigorate intellectual energy; and to furnish the requisite materials upon which to erect the noblest superstructure. Hitherto, you have been laying the foundation; and serving that kind of apprenticeship which may enable you to march forward by your own diligent and persevering efforts. Do not imagine, therefore, that your work is done. You have only commenced your studies.—Whatever may be your future profession, pursuit, business or destination, let books, science, literature, be your constant companions.

Every man, who intends to do the greatest possible good in his day and generation, will, every day, seek to acquire additional information. He will gather it from every source within his reach. His experience, his observation, his intercourse with the world, with men and things, his daily occupations, his incidental associations, the great volume of nature, ever open and spread out to his view, the intellectual treasures of a hundred generations which have passed away, the records of heavenly truth and wisdom—all will conspire to increase his stores, and to qualify him for a greater and a wider sphere of useful and virtuous exertion.

All the great and good men, who have enlightened, adorned and purified the world by their labours and their counsels, have been indefatigable in the pursuit of knowledge, up to the last moment of their existence. No matter how exalted any man's genius may be—history demonstrates, that, genius has never achieved great things without industry.

The lawyer, physician or divine, who limits his range of thought and study to the mere mechanical rules, or precedents, or forms, or prescriptions of his professional directory, will never become eminent in his own particular profession, nor will he ever be distinguished as a man. He may pass along with tolerable respectability, countenanced by the multitude of his brethren who are like himself, among a people not wise enough to distinguish noise from sense, or technical jargon and pedantry from learning and argument. But bring him into the presence of the master-spirits of the land or of the age, and he instantly shrinks into his native insignificance. Mere professional business of any kind, when a man never makes an excursion or voyage of discovery beyond it, always tends to narrow and contract the mind. He may be expert in small things, in petty official details, like an artisan in his workshop; but take him out of his daily routine, from off the beaten track, and he is bewildered and confused, or opinionated, obstinate and illiberal. He cannot grasp a great subject, nor comprehend a new moral theorem or proposition. He will discuss the interests of an empire as he would treat the cause of a client, or the case of a patient, or a point in theology. Now all these may be important matters; and so is the manufacture of a nail and of a pin. But a man of intellect ought to aspire after higher objects, and nobler attainments, and more expanded views.

In England, even the humblest artificers and mechanics, tradesmen and farmers, in almost every town, are beginning to form associations for mental improvement. They have procured libraries—they read literary and scientific journals—attend lectures on chemistry, political economy, mechanics, natural philosophy, history, mathematics—they study and converse with each other at every spare moment

or leisure hour. In a few years, they will take the lead of half the professional men in the kingdom, unless the latter condescend to follow their example. A similar spirit of enterprise and improvement has already appeared in our larger cities, and its march will be rapid, and its effects most salutary. Our youthful candidates for the learned professions, therefore, must prepare to enter the lists of honourable competition with a new and vigorous race of rival combatants for the prize of intellectual supremacy.

I know not what are to be your future professions or occupations. Every honest calling ought to be esteemed honorable. I address you as moral and intellectual beings—as the patriot citizens of a great republic. You may be merchants, mechanics, farmers, manufacturers—and yet be eminently distinguished and eminently useful, if you will persevere in seeking after knowledge and in making a proper use of it. The Medici—Necker—Ricardo—were merchants or bankers: Franklin was a mechanic: Washington was a farmer. By far the greater part of our countrymen are and must be farmers. They must be educated; or, what is the same thing, educated men must become farmers, if they would maintain their just influence and ascendancy in the state. I cannot wish for the alumni of Cumberland College, a more healthful, independent, useful, virtuous, honorable, patriotic employment, than that of agriculture. Nor is there any condition in life more favourable to the calm pursuits of science, philosophy and religion; and to all that previous training which ultimately constitutes wisdom and inflexible integrity. Should our college eventually become the grand nursery of intelligent, virtuous farmers, I shall esteem it the most highly favoured institution in our country. I have long thought that our college graduates often mistake their true path to honour and usefulness, in making choice of a learned profession, instead of converting agriculture into a learned profession, as it ought to be, and thereby obtaining an honest livelihood in the tranquil shades of the country.

I mean not, however, on the present occasion, to offer any advice as to the choice of a profession. Whatever station you may occupy, or whatever be your pursuits,

never cease to gain knowledge and to do good, as God, in his providence, shall give you opportunity.

But, in the second place, as you have yourselves enjoyed superior advantages of education, it is reasonable to expect that you will be the steady, enlightened, zealous friends and advocates of education, in every degree, and to the utmost extent, which the welfare of the community may require.

I present to your patronage and support the grand cause of education, in all its purity and excellence, and without restriction as to its objects.

That learning has been often abused and perverted—that many systems of education have proved ineffectual, useless or pernicious—that most existing seminaries might be greatly improved—I freely admit. Still, these admissions detract nothing from the intrinsic value of knowledge, nor from the paramount importance of education. The native character, tendency and genuine effects of any principle, system or institution, must decide its utility, and its claims to general adoption and support; and not the partial evils which human artifice, or folly, or wickedness may render it the instrument or the occasion of introducing and propagating. Under the plea and sanction of religion and liberty, our world has been filled with tumult, convulsion, crime and suffering. Are religion and liberty therefore worthless, or injurious to mankind? Would you banish religion and liberty from the earth, because both religion and liberty have been most grossly profaned; and employed, in ten thousand ways, to deceive, oppress, and degrade mankind? Then oppose not—condemn not education. The want of it has occasioned most of the misery and crime which have been inflicted on our world under the specious names and imposing authority of religion and liberty. When or where did crafty ecclesiastics or politicians ever succeed, under the guise of religion or liberty, in cheating the people out of both, except where the people were so ignorant that they could comprehend neither the one nor the other? Without competent knowledge, or without education, there can be neither religion nor liberty. Religion implies knowledge. Its simplest principles and dictates—its plainest duties and requirements cannot be understood or performed, without

previous instruction. This is true of every religion yet known—and of every religion that can be conceived—of paganism and theism—as well as of christianity. Nor can liberty be appreciated, acquired, defended or maintained, except by those who have learned what liberty means. If religion and liberty, therefore, be, in any degree, desirable; if they be indispensable to the happiness and perfection of our nature; if they be justly prized above all other blessings which bountiful Heaven has placed within the reach of the human family; then is the cause of education sufficiently established.

By education, we mean, such a thorough cultivation of all the faculties of our youth, as will best prepare them for the greatest usefulness and happiness. Let this definition be kept in view during the whole progress of our argument and illustrations. Those of my hearers who have reflected much on this subject, will not expect any benefit or information from the discussion. They will patiently bear with me, however, while I endeavor, in a plain popular way, to secure the good-will of this audience, generally, to a cause which may be emphatically styled the cause of the people.

Schools or Seminaries of education may be classed as follows: namely,

1. Primary or Infant Schools. 2. Common Schools. 3. Academies, or Classical or Intermediate Schools. 4. Colleges or Universities. 5. Special or Professional Schools: Such as those for Law, Divinity, Medicine, Military or Naval Science, Agriculture, Architecture, or any of the useful or liberal arts.

My remarks will be limited chiefly to Common Schools and Colleges.

But, in the outset, I beg leave to state distinctly, that, I do not ascribe omnipotence, or any uncontrollable sway to education. I do not go the length of asserting that man is absolutely and invincibly the creature of circumstances or of education. That he may be made an angel or a demon, or something between both, by any discipline or accidental associations. Still, to a certain extent, and with certain qualifications, this is true; and it is a truth of revelation, no less than a deduction from reason and experience. To ex-

hibit at once, and in pretty bold relief, the natural province, and legitimate power of education, I refer you to an extreme case or two, and to others of every day's occurrence. Suppose a person were to grow up, from infancy to manhood, in a desert or forest, without ever seeing a human being or hearing a human voice—in what respects would such a wild man differ from other wild animals? Would he speak, or think, or reason, or discriminate between good and evil, virtue and vice, happiness and misery? Would he not resemble the bears and the wolves of which he had been the nursling, the pupil and the companion—and, like them, shun the presence and the abodes of men? Again, were the son of a Solomon or a Bacon to be trained from his birth among savages—would he not become a savage in sentiment, manners, and habits? Indeed, it requires but a rapid glance at the nations of the earth, to perceive that the great mass of the people are every where formed by the circumstances, associations and instruction to which they are subjected. Where these are most auspicious, human nature assumes its most attractive and dignified character. Where these are most unfavourable, human nature appears in its most abject and degraded form. This, as a general truth or fact, none will dispute. If we pass from the ten thousand varieties of national character, and the ten thousand gradations of national excellence or depravity, to individuals of the most enlightened and most highly favoured country in Christendom, we shall behold similar effects continually resulting from similar causes.

It requires a good deal of patient investigation and minute analysis to ascertain how much of good and evil may be instilled into the mind of every child, by the means just specified, even when most destitute of regular and formal education. Thus, a child could never learn to speak, or to utter articulate sounds, without instruction; or, what is the same thing, without an opportunity of imitating others. Yet every child, not destitute of the proper organs in a sound state, does learn to speak, and that too, without being sent to school for the purpose. Thus, then, the first and most important of all arts is insensibly acquired at an age when it is usually thought superfluous or useless to com-

mence the work of instruction. Further, of the many hundreds or thousands of dialects actually spoken by mankind, the child always learns the language of its parents and companions: and he learns it more or less perfectly according to their habitual use of it. If they pronounce it correctly, and speak it with grammatical accuracy, purity and elegance, he will speak it agreeably to the best rules of orthoepy, grammar and rhetoric, without an effort, and previously to the knowledge of any rule whatever. In the same manner, and with the same facility, a child might acquire a number of languages, as experience has fully demonstrated. Now, this simple fact proves, first, that much, very much is actually learned by every child in infancy: and secondly, that the amount and perfection of this knowledge depend entirely on the opportunities and advantages possessed. Were we to extend this analysis to other particulars or departments; to principles and habits, moral, economical, physical, intellectual, religious, we should find the infant mind yielding to a daily and almost invisible influence, which may mark its character and destiny through life.

How important then to human happiness is it, that, the first school—the infant school—the parental school—should be a good one? Here is the great nursery of human weal or wo. Now, I care not whether children ever go to a public school or not, if parents will keep a better school at home, and do their duty to their offspring. I care not whether our youth go to college or not, if parents can and will teach them more effectually by their own firesides. But, unfortunately, the great mass of parents have shown themselves but sorry instructors and faithless guides to those who ought to be dearer to them than their own life. They are themselves, in general, too ignorant, to say no more, to do much. Hence, in our day, INFANT SCHOOLS have been established in many places, to supply this radical defect. And report speaks well of them wherever they have been tried. How far it may be practicable or beneficial to introduce them into our country, except in large towns or manufactories, I shall not stop to inquire.

In order to furnish the community at large with the next best aid to parental instruction, and as a substitute for it,

after the first period of infancy, COMMON SCHOOLS prefer the strongest claims to our regard. We hear a great deal, at the present day, about *common schools*: and one would imagine that they had already become the favorites of the people. If so, then the cause of liberty and virtue has gained much in our land, and we need not despair of the republic. Upon this ground we can all meet and harmoniously co-operate. In this grand enterprise, all the advocates of colleges in our country will go hand in hand with the humblest of the people, not merely in declaiming about the necessity and importance of common schools, but in organizing and putting into practical operation the best system that can be devised. I have no fears that any of the alumni of Cumberland College will ever prove recreant or backward in this good work.

Common Schools, then, are needed in Tennessee. How shall they be established? Let the people decide. What character and form shall they assume? Let every county be divided into such a number of school districts or departments as will conveniently accommodate all the inhabitants. Erect comfortable and commodious school-houses. Attach to each school-house a lot of ten acres of land, for the purpose of healthful exercise, gardening, farming and the mechanical arts. For the body requires training as well as the mind. Besides, as multitudes must live by manual labour, they ought betimes to acquire habits of industry, economy, temperance, hardihood, muscular strength, skill and dexterity. Employ teachers qualified to govern and instruct children in the best possible manner. Pay them according to their merit. Pay any sum necessary to command the services of the best and most accomplished teachers. Parsimony in this particular is not only impolitic; it is mean, it is absurd, it is ruinous. Better have no teachers, than to have incompetent, immoral, lazy, passionate or indiscreet ones; however cheaply they may be procured. Their influence will not be merely negative: it will be positive and most powerful. I have often looked with horror upon the kind of common schools and teachers to which thousands of children, during several of their best years, are cruelly and wantonly subjected in the older states. But it is or was

the fashion, in many places, to hire a blockhead or a vagabond, because he would teach a child for a dollar and twenty-five cents per quarter! Now, if there be any thing on earth for which a parent ought to feel disposed to pay liberally, it is for the faithful instruction of his children. Compared with this, every other interest vanishes like chaff before the wind—it is less than nothing. And yet, unless the world has suddenly grown much wiser, there is no service so grudgingly and so pitifully rewarded. The consequence is what might have been expected. Every man of cleverness and ambition will turn his back with scorn upon the country school. He will become a lawyer, a physician, a merchant, a mechanic, a farmer, or a farmer's overseer, in preference. Until school keeping be made an honorable and a lucrative profession, suitable teachers will never be forthcoming in this free country.

But what is meant by a common school education? This question has never been answered; and it cannot be very satisfactorily answered. Some may think it enough that their children learn to read: others will insist on writing: many will be content with reading, writing and arithmetic. Others will add to the list, grammar, geography, history—perhaps, practical mathematics, physics, astronomy, mechanics, rural economy—with several other branches of science and literature, as ethics, rhetoric, political economy, geology, chemistry, mineralogy, botany:—in short, where shall the limit be fixed? Who shall prescribe the boundaries beyond which a common school education shall never extend? It is evident, upon the slightest reflection, that the phrase *common school education* is a very indefinite one. How far beyond the alphabet it may be carried, has never been ascertained. Experiments are now making in Europe, and in several sections of our own country, which are calculated to give a totally different aspect to this whole concern. It has been discovered at length, what indeed was always sufficiently obvious, that a boy need not be kept at school eight or ten years to learn to read his primer, write his name, cipher to the rule of three,—and to hate books and learning for the rest of his life. It has been discovered that boys may, in three or four years, be taught a

hundred fold more, by skilful teachers, in a skilful way, than their fathers ever dreamt of learning at all. This is the grandest discovery of our age. It will do more to meliorate the moral, physical and political condition of mankind generally, than all other means ever yet devised.

The excellence and the extent of a common school education, therefore, will ever depend on the qualifications of the teacher and the system which he pursues. No man can teach more than he knows himself. Every man can teach all that he does know. The more he knows, the more useful will he be. In the humblest school in the country, he will find some pupils to be benefited to the utmost extent of his ability to instruct them. And upon the Monitorial or Lancasterian plan, he can teach any number.

Let us then speedily have common or elementary schools so abundant and so wisely conducted, that, every son (I say nothing now of the daughters) of the commonwealth may be well and amply instructed. Let him acquire a taste for knowledge, and he will never cease to be a learner while he lives. He will then be fitted for usefulness and honor. He will always have resources within himself. He will be conscious that he is an intellectual being; and that intellectual pleasures are among the purest, noblest and least expensive that can be enjoyed.

But we must not stop here. Common schools are not enough. They will not satisfy the public necessities.—The better and more efficient the common schools become, the greater will be the demand for institutions of a higher order. Multitudes of aspiring youth will pant for more intellectual treasures. They will look out for other seats of learning where they may advance still further. Will you drive them to neighboring or distant states, and compel them to expend abroad the thousands of dollars which sound policy, to say no more, ought to induce you to keep in circulation at home? You must then establish, in every county, one or more first rate *Classical Schools* or *Academies*, where the languages and sciences may be more extensively and systematically taught. Let some twenty or fifty acres of land be attached to each of these seminaries, for the same purposes that we have already assigned

them to the common schools. Here again I must avoid details. Merely adding, however, that all this will not be sufficient. Learning is like wealth;—the more we get, the more we covet. No laws can prescribe the limit to mental, any more than to pecuniary acquisitions.

We must have one or more Colleges to receive the numerous candidates for the highest literary honors and attainments. Our sister states have them; and if our youth cannot be accommodated at home, they will go where they can be better served. Now, a great College or University cannot be reared except at a great expense. It is not like an ordinary school or academy, which any enterprising individual, with moderate resources, may establish any where. The aid of government—the wealth of the state—or else the combined efforts and contributions of many liberal individuals—will be necessary to build up a college.—Upon the University of Virginia, nearly half a million of dollars were expended before a pupil was admitted: and fifteen thousand dollars have been appropriated annually for ever to the support of Professors. And this was the work of the people's long tried champion and greatest favorite—the very oracle of orthodox republicanism—the immortal author of the Declaration of our National Independence.

I do not say that Tennessee should forthwith vote half a million of dollars, or any other sum, to a college. But she ought to make ample provision for the intellectual wants of her citizens. And she is able to do this, cost what it may. Were a judicious system of common schools and academies put into operation immediately: within half a dozen years, there would be five hundred youths in West Tennessee alone, eager to avail themselves of the benefits of a college. And should there be no college in West Tennessee, adapted to their wants and wishes, they will cross the Mountains or the Ocean in search of knowledge, and carry along with them from two to five hundred thousand dollars a year, as a tribute to the superior wisdom and intelligence of distant or foreign states. Thus, in a single year, might be withdrawn from the state more money than would suffice to create a Cambridge at our very doors. This is a consideration which every political economist ought to appreciate,

and which the legal guardians of the people's welfare and prosperity ought gravely to ponder. It is assuredly no light evil to any community, when capital or income shall seek a foreign market without producing an equivalent return. Every dollar thus forced away is a dollar lost to the state.

I am well aware of the popular prejudices and apprehensions which are cherished in regard to colleges and college graduates. I know that they are frequently represented as the enemies of general improvement—as having no sympathy, or community of feeling or interest with the great mass of the people. That they constitute a class or party by themselves, and that they ought to be viewed with jealousy and suspicion by all the vigilant patriotic guardians of our liberties. If there has ever been any plausible pretext for such an opinion, it certainly exists not in our country. I have never yet heard of one liberally educated American who was not a decided friend to every well devised plan and measure calculated to diffuse the blessings of knowledge universally. He is from experience, from conviction, from principle, from patriotism, from philanthropy, the firm, persevering and zealous advocate and promoter of education among the people. He ardently desires that every son and daughter of the Republic may be well educated. And that his deeds have nobly corresponded with his professions, let facts speak for themselves. This is logic not easily to be encountered.

And if there be any friends of popular instruction, of liberty and the rights of man, in the old world, they are to be found exclusively among the best educated. The demolition of despotism in France, and the establishment of a free representative government in its stead, were first thought of, canvassed and attempted by the most enlightened men in the kingdom: and long before the ignorant millions of that ill-fated country had ever heard the name of liberty. And it was precisely because the millions could not comprehend its import, much less appreciate its value, that, when once excited, they became ungovernable, furious, brutal, ferocious: and the consequences need no recital or comment. Had the people, however, been previously instructed in the first elements of letters and politics; had

they learned how to reflect, to reason and to judge, a very different result would have been witnessed. Similar attempts have been made, by a few enlightened patriots in other parts of Europe, to meliorate the political condition of the people, which, from a similar cause, have proved equally abortive.

From the Colleges and Universities of Europe have emanated those rays of light which have caused despots to tremble on their thrones. And, at this day, those great nurseries of truth and liberty are more dreaded by the emperors, kings and princes of Russia, Austria, Prussia and Germany, than any and all other enemies put together.—Hence the rigid system of police and jealous espionage exercised towards them. Strange that republicans should represent colleges as hostile to liberty, when tyrants persecute them because they are friendly to liberty. Youth cannot long be familiar with the history and institutions of Greece and Rome, without imbibing something of that enthusiasm for liberty which inspired a Demosthenes, an Epaminondas, a Phocion, a Cicero, a Brutus and a Cato. By the way, the friends of liberty ought to be the last men on earth to decry classical learning.

It was from the newly instituted colleges of Scio and Bucharest, that, the first champions of liberty and independence issued, to animate their fellow bondmen of Modern Greece to break the chains of Mohammedan oppressors. And they have made every effort to establish schools, throughout their degraded country, to teach lessons of liberty to the people. God grant them success in their glorious struggle; and a generous, high-minded, patriotic, virtuous, enlightened Washington, to direct their energies in the cabinet and in the field!

Now there can be no better or stronger evidence in favour of the general beneficial tendency of learning, however obtained, than the fact, that, whenever, in ancient or modern times, endeavours have been made to procure liberty to a people, and wherever it has been acquired, those endeavours were made, and that acquisition secured, by men of superior knowledge. Such is the language of history from Moses to Bolivar. And among the most enlightened phi-

lanthropists on the continent of Europe at this moment, the grand cause of their discouragement and despair in regard to liberty, is, that the people are too ignorant to be intrusted with liberty; and hence they feel constrained to remain inactive. They fain would give instruction to the people, in order to prepare and qualify them for free and liberal institutions, would their masters permit them.

When our fathers commenced their almost hopeless controversy with the mother country; who were the kindred spirits attracted to our shores and to our aid by the native charms and legitimate claims of liberty? Not the degraded serf or feudal slave—not the illiterate farmer or mechanic—but such men as might have adorned the proudest court in Christendom—men of whom their own country was unworthy—men who understood the full import of the glorious cause to which they were ready to sacrifice titles, and honours, and fortune and life:—they were Pulaski, Steuben, De Kalb, Kosciusko, La Fayette.

And who, allow me to ask my republican auditors, or, if they please, to remind them of what, perchance, they may have forgotten—who were the prompters, the mainsprings, the leaders of our memorable revolution? The answer to the question is upon every schoolboy's tongue. He will recount a catalogue of patriots, who, for profound knowledge and practical wisdom, were never surpassed in any age or country. Such were the friends of our own liberties, at a time too, when they were not only stigmatized as rebels, but were in hourly danger of being hanged as rebels. They were the master-spirits who aroused the people to resistance. They were honest men, and they united in promoting the permanent welfare of their country. Happily, the people, having been generally educated at common schools, were sufficiently informed to comprehend their rights, when those rights were ably explained to them, and wise enough to be guided by their superiors in wisdom. But had the intelligent, the learned colonists of those days combined with the English aristocracy in maintaining the ancient government in all its plans of oppression, the people would never have thought of a revolution. Had they been enlisted on the side of the British ministry, we had

this day been the loyal subjects of his majesty, George the Fourth.

They too, be it remembered, zealously espoused the cause of education; well assured that the goodly fabric of liberty, which they had succeeded in rearing, would speedily tumble into ruins, or become the citadel of some future Cæsar or Catiline, unless the rising and each successive generation should be taught to maintain their rights by fully comprehending them. Hence, whenever they had opportunity, in the legislative councils of the States or of the Nation, they endeavored to secure a legal provision for schools and colleges, either by the appropriation of public lands, or by gradually accumulating an adequate pecuniary fund for the purpose. To the general truth of this representation, I am not acquainted with a single exception among our revolutionary heroes and statesmen. All the Presidents of the United States have uniformly agreed in sentiment on this subject. And who, of the long list of worthies whom the people have delighted to honour as patriots, has ever ventured to advocate a contrary doctrine?

Franklin laboured, during his whole life, in the cause of schools, from the humblest to the highest, and finally succeeded in founding the University of Pennsylvania: although his example has been often cited to prove the inutility of all such institutions. He had himself conquered difficulties in the acquisition of science, which not one of a million would ever think of encountering. And he possessed too much good sense, and too much benevolence to wish others to be left to the mere chance of creating for themselves a path to eminence, when a great public highway might be so easily constructed for their convenience. He knew that an extraordinary exception to a general rule or law ought never to be urged against the rule itself.

Washington devoted much of his time and all the weight of his influence to the same object. And he, at last, liberally endowed a college in his native State, which still bears his name.

Jefferson, besides promoting the same great cause during the long period of his public career, consecrated the last seventeen years of his valuable life to the establishment of a

University, upon the most permanent basis and of the most enlarged dimensions. And centuries hence, probably, the name of Jefferson will be more revered and distinguished as the father of the University of Virginia, than as a philosopher or statesman.

No man, it is presumed, will, at the present day, accuse a Franklin, a Washington, or a Jefferson of any lack of patriotism or republicanism. And no man need be ashamed to follow their example. May their spirit rest upon some favoured son of Tennessee; and may she have the honour of perpetuating upon the page of history, a name worthy, in all respects, to be associated with our immortal Franklin, Washington and Jefferson! This honour, I doubt not, she will have; and that our Academic Halls will hail him as a patron and benefactor, while virtue and science and liberty shall exist in our land.

As I am dealing altogether with facts, and not with theories; and as I do not wish to go a hair's breadth beyond the simple truth, I take leave distinctly to announce to you, that, I do not affirm that all men of learning have, every where and under all circumstances, been the friends of liberty and human happiness. Far from it. The position which I maintain is simply this;—that liberty and the best interests of humanity, have ever been ably and successfully advocated and promoted only by men well informed; and by the best informed too of the age and country in which they flourished. And, that, among ourselves, the most enlightened citizens have ever approved themselves the most effectual guardians of the people's rights. I admit also, that so far as this argument is concerned, it matters not where or how they acquire the requisite knowledge—whether in common schools or high schools—in colleges or universities—at home or abroad—by their own unassisted efforts and enterprise, or from public institutions established by the government or by individual munificence. But until a better mode of arriving at the object can be devised, we shall continue to regard schools and colleges as indispensable. So long as the republic shall need learned men, we shall expect schools and colleges to furnish them.—They have already done the state some service: and they are destined, we trust, to do it a great deal more.

I am no blind admirer of colleges and universities. There exists not one, in Europe or America, which might not be greatly improved. The same may be said of common schools, and of all human institutions. Shall we, therefore, put an end to every system of education, because none has hitherto been faultless? Will those who denounce colleges, pretend that common schools are less obnoxious to censure; or that they are as good as they need to be? *Reformation—improvement*—is the order of the age—and it must be obeyed. The work must be commenced and continued simultaneously in all our seminaries, great and small. The cause is one and indivisible. Colleges exert an important influence on the character of common schools: and these again constitute the foundation of colleges. Unless common schools be good, our colleges will not be good. The intermediate schools or academies will not remedy the defects of the one or the other. It is all important to begin well. If boys enter college with idle and vicious habits, they will probably continue idle and vicious. If they have been well trained at home and at school, they will be orderly, virtuous and diligent in college. The graduates of our colleges generally will be found to have received their bias to virtue or vice, under the parental roof, and from their earliest instructors and associates. If parents neglect their sons, or leave them to ignorant or profligate preceptors or companions, during childhood and early youth, they need not expect that the discipline of any college on earth will operate upon them any miraculous regenerating influence.—Such boys are ruined before they enter college: although parents are generally charitable enough to blame the college for their own inexcusable folly and cruel indulgence, when their hopeless sons disappoint their unreasonable expectations. Colleges have enough to answer for: let them not be charged with sins of which they are innocent. Nor let them be required to accomplish impossibilities. Supply them with pupils, who have been thoroughly disciplined at home and at school—of a suitable age to act with reasonable discretion, and who are really desirous to acquire knowledge—and the public will hear very little of the follies and dissipation of a college life. No real friend of col-

leges, therefore, can ever be hostile or indifferent to good common schools.

It were well for the community, if the professed advocates of common schools were equally well disposed towards colleges. Their grand objection to them, besides those already hinted at, is briefly this:—That colleges are designed exclusively for the rich—that the poor cannot be benefited by them—and, therefore, that the poor ought not to be taxed for their support, or that the people's purse ought not to be burdened on their account.

This specious and very sage objection contains several sophisms and several falsehoods.

In the first place: Colleges, in our country, are not, never were, and never can be designed exclusively for the rich. For, in fact, many poor youths have been educated in every college of the Union during every year of their existence. But then, such poor youths must usually belong to the vicinity, or at least to the state, in which the college is situated. Neither Connecticut nor New-Jersey would ever think of educating at their colleges a poor youth of Tennessee: but many hundreds of poor, very poor young men of their own states have been thus educated. Without a college at home, every poor youth is necessarily cut off from all hope or chance of any such privilege.

Again, between the rich and the poor, there is in the community another class of citizens vastly larger than both of them put together—the middling class, and the best class—all of whom might educate one or more sons at college, at an expense of from fifty to a hundred and fifty dollars per year, who could never send their sons abroad at an expense of from five hundred to a thousand dollars a year. Will the state do nothing for this large and respectable body of her citizens? The merest trifle contributed by each would place advantages within the reach of the whole, which no individual could otherwise possibly command.

But, in the second place, grant that colleges are designed exclusively for the rich. What does a wise policy dictate as the proper course to be pursued? The question is not, whether the rich shall, or shall not educate their sons at a college; but whether they *may* do it at home, or *must* do

it abroad? For with money, they can do what they please. They can send their sons to Philadelphia or Paris, to Oxford or Edinburgh. Would it not be good policy then to require these rich men to build up a college, suited to their own purposes, and at their own expense; and thereby constrain or induce them to employ their funds, and to disburse their ample revenues within the state, to the unspeakable benefit of all classes of citizens, and especially of the middling and poorest, by encouraging every species of industry and enhancing the value of every description of property, to the full amount of the money thus prevented from going into the hands of foreigners? Were this matter rightly understood by the people, they would presently perceive, that, the main scope of the pretext so artfully employed to mislead them, was, after all, at bottom, nothing more than to spare the purses of the rich, to the manifest detriment of the whole community—of the rich as well as the poor—for the rich deceive themselves if they imagine that they will be the gainers in any way by such a course. It will cost a rich man ten times as much to educate one son at a distant seminary as he would be required to contribute, during his whole life, for the erection of a college, according to any equitable plan of assessment or taxation which might be adopted for the purpose.

But, in the third place,—why all this clamour and affectation of zeal in behalf of the poor? Do men legislate only for the poor? Does the government exist solely for the poor? Are the poor, and they only, elected to office? Is not some pecuniary or *landed* qualification indispensable to any man's eligibility to office? Is the public money—ay, the people's money—paid out in salaries to the poor—to poor governors, poor judges, poor senators? Are banking, insurance, manufacturing, turnpike, bridge, or canal companies incorporated from among the poor, and chiefly for the benefit of the poor? One might imagine from the noise made on the subject, that the poor were all in all to the state; that they were the precious objects of the government's special care and protection: Since their self-constituted patrons virtually maintain, that, if they cannot all go to college, there shall be no college. Why not decree, that

if the poor man cannot ride in a coach, there shall be no coaches; or that the rich shall not use them?

Now the plain simple truth is, that the poor are never taxed in our country for any purpose whatever. All taxes are levied on property. Were twenty colleges to be commenced to-morrow, the poor would not be burdened a farthing. They would, on the contrary, be immediately benefited by the demand thus created for their labour, and by the liberal wages which would be paid them.

But, in the fourth place, strictly speaking, there are no *poor* in our country. Among the white population there is no degraded *caste*. We have no *class* of poor, like the poor of Europe. We impose on ourselves by the imported terms and phraseology of transatlantic society. And hence we talk as currently about the *poor*, as would an English lord or German baron. Forgetting that the poorest man in the republic may become rich. The richest of our citizens have been poor. The rich and the poor are frequently related to each other. The rich man may have a poor father or brother. And the poorest individual may be nearly allied to the most distinguished families in the land. Our state of society is constantly fluctuating. Rich families daily decline: poor ones daily advance. Wealth and poverty are mere accidents. They are not hereditary in particular lines, or perpetuated in particular families. It is absurd therefore to declaim or to speculate about the poor as if they were an oppressed, miserable, helpless class, like the Russian or Polish peasantry. We have all been poor. We may be poor again. When poor, we were obliged to deny ourselves many comforts, luxuries and privileges which we now enjoy; and it was mainly by this self-denial that we were enabled to improve our condition. And such must ever be the case. If the poor wish to rise above their present condition, they can do so, every where in our country, by industry, prudence and economy: and they will continue to do so, as long as they shall be left to their own free energies. I trust the time is far distant, when our government shall think it worth while to perpetuate pauperism amongst us by legal encouragement—by premiums in the shape of poor rates.

The only distinction which exists among our citizens, worthy of notice, is between the educated and the uneducated. The former engross all the wealth, offices, and influence in the nation; while the latter remain the victims of want, of crime, of infamy, and of punishment. I here use the term *educated* in a very wide and comprehensive sense. That individual who has learned how to labour at any honest occupation, and who knows how to manage his earnings skilfully, is educated, and well educated, compared with those who have been brought up to no business; or who are destitute of sobriety, prudence and economy. *He* may become rich and honourable; while *they* are necessarily doomed to poverty and wretchedness. Between these two descriptions of persons there is an impassable gulf. They are further removed from each other than the lord and his vassal: and the longer they live the wider will be the distance between them. Whoever has grown up in total ignorance of the means of acquiring an honest livelihood, and with vicious habits, may be regarded, in general, as helpless and hopeless. Gross ignorance, at least of every thing good and useful, is the cause of all the degradation in our country. Now although there may be no effectual remedy for the evil which actually exists, yet there is a preventive—its further progress may be checked—its recurrence may be prevented. This preventive remedy is instruction, moral, intellectual, physical, religious. It is not only the cheapest—it is the only remedy. If inveterate habits cannot be changed; take care that the children form better habits, and imbibe better principles than their fathers.

Our country has expended, and continues to expend, on courts of justice and criminal prosecutions—on prisons and penitentiaries—for the punishment and safe keeping of a few veteran and incorrigible villains, vastly more money than would be required to give a suitable education to all the absolutely indigent youth in the nation. If government, therefore, instead of wasting millions in the hopeless endeavour to reform the hardened offender, would cause such children as would otherwise be neglected, to be properly disciplined and brought up, there would soon be little necessity for prisons or penitentiaries. Here is the right end

to begin at—the proper starting point—the first step in the work of general reformation, without which every other will be taken in vain. Happily, wherever the experiment has been made, it has fully succeeded. Among the thousands of poor children recently trained in the free schools of the city of New-York, not one has been sentenced to bridewell. Thus far then, at least, the rich might be fairly taxed for the benefit of the poor. This would not only be real benevolence—it would be the wisest policy—the least expensive course that could be adopted. And if the state should choose to do more; let a certain proportion of the most promising boys in the common schools be annually advanced to the academy; and the best of these again to the college, at the public expense.

It is worse than idle to object to colleges because they do not educate the poor, and yet to refuse them the means of doing it. If the state please, she can organize and endow a college, so that the poor and the rich may enjoy its privileges gratis. Or she may make such provision only for the poor, and compel the rich to pay. She has it in her power to confer on the poor, in this respect, whatever favours she chooses. If any honest friend of the poor and the ignorant can devise a more liberal or judicious system for their elevation in society, it shall receive my hearty approbation and support.

Let it not be inferred from any thing just said, that I am an enemy to the penitentiary system. It is, when judiciously administered, a good and necessary system, in the existing state of our society. But it may, and I doubt not, will be, in a great measure, superseded by the proper training of our youth, who would otherwise become its pitiable subjects.

Having thus, at greater length than I intended, disposed of some of the popular objections to colleges—objections which I have frequently heard advanced in Tennessee—I might proceed to show what a college ought to be. But as I have, on a former occasion, expressed my views pretty fully on this subject, I shall not now repeat them.

I must be permitted, however, to say a word in behalf of Cumberland College; especially to my young friends, who

have just been adorned with her laurel, and who will be regarded as her representatives before the public, and whom she will regard as her natural and most warmly devoted friends and advocates.

You have been told, or you have witnessed the various fortune of this institution—its many and well sustained struggles for existence—its decline and failure after a few bright days of sunshine and prosperity—its recent resuscitation under circumstances which would have discouraged and appalled men of ordinary capacity and enterprise—its conduct, character and progress during the period of nearly two years since its re-organization; and you cannot be insensible to the numerous difficulties and obstacles, which it must still encounter, before it can attain that pre-eminent rank to which she aspires. For she will not be content with humble mediocrity, nor with a mere equality with her sister institutions. She aims at vastly greater eminence and usefulness than has yet been reached by any of them. This aim will be pronounced visionary by those who do not know what constitutes the real excellence of a college, and by those who are ever disposed to predict a failure where they do not wish success.

Men frequently, too, labour under an unfortunate prejudice on this subject. They presume that colleges must be growing better as they grow older; and distance of situation greatly increases their reverence. Hence, a venerable monastic establishment, a hundred years old, and a thousand miles off, is conceived to possess advantages which young Tennessee cannot hope for in a century. Now I venture to assert, that, our infant university might be made, in five years, superior to any and to all the colleges in our country—if the people will but decree it. Let us not be imposed on by mere names. Buildings, books, apparatus, teachers, constitute the principal expensive ingredients of a university: and money can command them all, in as great abundance and perfection *here*, as in Europe or *old* America. We have the full benefit of all past experience to begin with. Whatever is excellent in existing institutions, we may adopt: whatever is superfluous, or antiquated, or faulty, we may reject. It is much easier to create a good institu-

tion than to mend a bad one. Ancient usage naturally becomes prescriptive, and ordinarily prevents innovation or improvement.

Upon the virgin soil of Tennessee, then, may be reared a seminary, which shall eclipse, in grandeur of design and felicity of execution, and in the wisdom of its arrangements and combinations, all other institutions—if her sons will but prove true to themselves and faithful to future generations. A more eligible or healthful site for such an establishment cannot be found in the Western country. *Here* is the place, and *now* is the time for generous enterprise. Here let us erect a university, so decidedly and confessedly superior in every department, that a rival or competitor need not be feared. Let us make ample provision for every species of instruction—scientific, literary, professional—which our country demands. Let education be extended to the physical and moral, as well as to the mental faculties. Let agriculture, horticulture, civil and military engineering, gymnastics, the liberal and the mechanical arts—whatever may tend to impart vigour, dignity, grace, activity, health, to the body—whatever may tend to purify the heart, improve the morals and manners, discipline the intellect, and to furnish it with copious stores of useful elementary knowledge,—obtain their appropriate place and rank, and receive merited attention in our seminary; so that parents may, with confidence, commit their sons to our care. Assured that they will be in safe and skilful hands—under a government, equitable, paternal, mild, firm, vigilant and faithful—where their every interest will be consulted, their every faculty be duly cultivated, and where every effort will be made to render them intelligent, virtuous, accomplished citizens. Does any man doubt that such an institution will ever want patronage? Make it the best in the country; and will it not command the patronage of the country? Such an establishment as we contemplate, the public mind is already prepared for, and has begun to call for. This call is imperative—it will be heard—it will be answered. We must meet it or others will.

Our college is already as good and respectable as most others; certainly inferior to none in the West. It has re-

ceived the most flattering encouragement. No college, in any part of our country, has, with the same means, effected as much, or numbered as many students, in so short a period. I may add, too, without exaggeration or compliment, that, the orderly, moral, gentlemanly deportment of our students, during the past session especially, and of most of them from the beginning, would have done credit to any seminary. And that they have made extraordinary proficiency in the languages and sciences, taught by our laborious and accomplished professors, has been fully acknowledged by all who have attended their public examinations or ordinary recitations. The friends of the college, therefore, have no ground for despondency on the one hand; and we trust that they will not be so far satisfied with its actual condition on the other, as to relax their zealous efforts for its future improvement.

In this great work, there is no resting place—no point to stop at. With the increase of population, with the march of mind and the progress of universal improvement, we must keep pace. We must daily advance. **PERFECTION** should be our motto and our aim, however much we may ultimately fail of attaining it. Every successful step should prompt to another and a greater. When we have gained one eminence, we shall be able to descry a still higher and a more inviting; which, when reached, must serve only to enlarge our horizon, and extend our vision, and brighten our hopes, and animate our efforts, and cheer us in our labours, for the welfare of mankind.

The Trustees of Cumberland College have purchased one hundred and twenty acres of land to meet the various purposes of their contemplated university. It is proposed immediately to commence the erection of a series of buildings for the accommodation of students, instructors and stewards; consisting of five additional colleges, each sufficiently commodious for a hundred students and three assistant professors or tutors, and of seven houses for as many principal or head professors. We shall then have six colleges, and twenty-five instructors, and accommodations for six hundred pupils. To each college will be attached a refectory or boarding house, with eight or ten acres of land

for gardening and exercise. The colleges will be erected at such distances from each other as to prevent the usual evils resulting from the congregation of large numbers of youth at the same place. Professors will occupy houses on the intervening lots: and there will be at least three officers resident within the walls of each college. We shall thus have six distinct and separate families, so far as regards domestic economy, internal police, and social order; while one *Senatus Academicus* will superintend and control the whole.

Gardens and mechanics' shops will be interspersed among the various edifices, in such manner as to be easily accessible to all the youth for improvement and recreation.—Whenever the present ground shall be thus occupied, it will be necessary to procure fifty or a hundred acres more, for a model or experimental farm; that agriculture, the noblest of sciences and the most important of the useful arts, may be thoroughly studied and practised. At a future period, or as soon as the means can be obtained, other suitable edifices, both useful and ornamental, may be erected. The plan admits of indefinite extension; and in proportion to its enlargement, its advantages will be increased, while the expense of its maintenance will be diminished.

In order to execute our present design, only about \$200,000 will be required. This sum might be furnished by the State at once; or in two, four, eight or ten years. Or it may be obtained partly by donations, and partly by loan. Any individual, for instance, bestowing \$20,000 may give his name to a college or to a professorship: or any number of individuals, subscribing that sum, may give any name they please to a college or professorship. Suppose Davidson county, or even Nashville were disposed to erect a monument to the memory of her most honoured citizen; what could she do more grateful to him, more worthy of herself, more beneficial to the republic, than to contribute the sum of \$20,000 to build an edifice, on yonder hill, to be known among all future generations as JACKSON COLLEGE, founded and endowed by the citizens of Davidson county or of Nashville, in the year ——— what year shall be designated? If the appeal were made to her generosity,

her public spirit, her gratitude, her just pride and magnanimity, I cannot deem so lightly of her present citizens as to anticipate a refusal, which would prove her alike unworthy of a great University and of the Hero of New Orleans.

Let us calculate—we have, within the limits of our city corporation alone, not less than four thousand free white inhabitants. Were each to give five dollars, or were two thousand to give each ten dollars, or were one thousand to give twenty dollars apiece, the object would be accomplished without the aid of the county at large: and who could feel the burthen? Thus, then, one college, at least, is provided for. Some others might possibly be erected by similar means, and in honor of other meritorious individuals.

The little town of Amherst, in Massachusetts, which does not contain one half of the population, nor one twentieth part of the wealth of Nashville, raised, by private subscription in 1821, the sum of fifty thousand dollars to commence a college within its limits.* And several other towns in our country have been equally munificent.

Let no man imagine, that, in giving money to a college, he is doling out alms to an importunate or worthless beggar. He does honour to himself by the act; and the institution honours him by accepting his bounty; and is able to confer on him and his family a greater and more durable honour than mere selfish wealth can ever procure. The otherwise obscure names of Harvard, Yale, Dartmouth, Bowdoin, Williams, Brown, Bartlett, Phillips, Dickinson, Rutgers, will be immortalized by the seminaries to which they have been benefactors, and which will bear their names for ever. If honour, real honour, lasting honour, be worth seeking; here is the road to it.

If, however, nothing can be obtained from our legislature, or from our good city or county, or from individuals, we may borrow the whole sum of two hundred thousand dollars, at an interest not exceeding six per cent—creating a transferable six per cent stock—and, in twenty years, we could easily pay off both principal and interest, at the pre-

*Another sum of \$50,000 was added to the funds of Amherst College by the private subscription of its friends, during the last year (1832.) And the sum of \$100,000 was raised for the benefit of Yale College by her alumni during the same year.

sent rate of charges for tuition and room-rent. It would be merely necessary, in order to procure the loan, that the state should guaranty the payment, or that responsible individuals should underwrite for us. And we can pléde ample means either to the state or to individuals, to secure the one or the other, from all hazard of eventual loss; as I am prepared to demonstrate, at the proper time to all competent judges. Now it would be vastly preferable that the money should be gratuitously furnished, because (to specify no other advantages) the expenses of an education at our university might be diminished one half immediately; and thus would the portals of science be opened wide to the great majority of our people.

But the funds must and will be forthcoming from some quarter. We are not to be deterred or frightened from our purpose by any obstacles, real or imaginary. We have very deliberately counted the cost: and ONWARD is engraven upon our banners and upon our hearts.

Who, let me ask—I put the question to this assembly—to the good people of Tennessee—who will oppose our projected institution, designed, as it is, exclusively for the benefit of this people? I will tell you. It will be opposed by the faint-hearted, the cowardly, the ignorant, the covetous; and by all the enemies of light, truth, virtue and human happiness. It will be opposed by that description of selfish, arrogant, self-sufficient, *would be* lords and Solomons, who exist in every petty village, and who always oppose whatever does not originate from themselves, or which is not submitted to their own *wise* management and control. It will be opposed by those who can, by any artifice or misrepresentation, convert the scheme into a political hobby to ride into office. It will be opposed by those who despair of getting out of it a job—a bargain—a money-making speculation—some paltry private gain or advantage. But it will never be opposed by one honest man, by one honourable man, by one enlightened man, by one patriotic man, by one benevolent man, by one great or good man.

Here then, before the venerable fathers, who first planted the standard of civilization and christianity in this recent wilderness, shall have left the scene of their early toils and

sufferings for ever, let the banks of the Cumberland be adorned with the majestic temples of science and with the academic groves, which may proudly vie with those which have conferred immortality on the Cam and the Isis.

ALMA MATER confidently appeals to her own ingenuous alumni; and claims of them chivalrous fealty, and honourable service, and lasting attachment, and generous support. She will not appeal to them in vain. And may she, as I doubt not she will, a thousand generations after all her enemies shall be forgotten, be the ornament, the pride, and the glory of Tennessee!

Having thus earnestly pressed upon your notice the great cause of education, and the cause of our own infant university in particular, as worthy of peculiar regard and beneficence; I may briefly add, in this connexion, that every scheme and enterprise, calculated, in any degree, to promote human happiness, will also claim your countenance and support. You must be the leaders—where others better qualified do not offer—in every good work. I do not recommend to you merely those magnificent and imposing projects for the melioration of the condition of mankind, which are sufficiently popular to command general respect; but, besides these, I recommend to you those humbler, less dazzling, less conspicuous, and, frequently, more disinterested modes of doing good, which occur every day, in every village, and in almost every family. Now, to be able to do good, in any of the modes suggested or contemplated, remember, that, industry in acquiring knowledge or wealth will not alone suffice. Nor will it be sufficient to abstain from degrading vice—from intemperance and gambling—from every species of youthful irregularity and ruinous dissipation. You must study prudence and economy in the management of both time and money. A man, extravagant in his ordinary expenses, fond of show and ostentation, eager to be at the head of the fashionable world or in the pursuit of fashionable pleasures and follies, is not likely to be generous. He will never become a Howard or a Franklin. The man of plain and simple habits, who avoids all needless display and luxury, who is content with what is

useful and comfortable, is the man who has the most to bestow on objects of charity, benevolence and public utility.

Go then, Young Gentlemen, and prosecute with persevering ardour, the new course of study and discipline, which is to qualify you to enter, in due time, upon the great theatre of active, useful, honourable life. Be not in haste to engage in those various liberal professions, to which most or all of you, perhaps, intend hereafter to devote your faculties. Wait, with patience, the full development of your mental powers; and continue long to collect, with untiring assiduity, from every source, the treasures of knowledge which are necessary to fit you for eminence in any profession; and for the noblest career of usefulness to your country, and for the most exalted stations within her gift. Despise not—neglect not any department of human learning, whenever and wherever it can be consistently cultivated. No man ever denounces, as useless or superfluous, any science or language with which he is himself acquainted. The ignorant only, condemn: and they condemn what they do not understand, and because they do not understand it. Whenever, therefore, you hear a man declaiming against any literary or scientific pursuit, you may rest assured that he knows nothing of the matter: and you will need no better evidence of his total incompetency to sit in judgment upon the case. Of all the learned men of whatever age, country or profession, who have benefited our world by their labours—who have been most distinguished and most successful? Precisely those who have judiciously put under contribution, to the greatest extent, every corner and recess of the grand temple of science, which it was possible for them to explore. There is such an intimate connexion between the sciences, such a perfect harmony of parts in the great whole of human knowledge, that all may frequently, like the rays of the sun, be brought to bear intensely on a single point; or, at pleasure, be spread over an immense surface, diffusing light and heat and joy to the utmost verge of civilized society.

Study, then, to improve all your time in the most profitable manner. Let your amusements be rational, virtuous, seasonable, manly, and invigorating to body and mind. Let

order, and method, and system be adopted and rigorously maintained. Study hard while you profess to study. Relax at suitable intervals, only to return with redoubled ardor to your books. Thus, health, serenity of mind, elasticity of spirits, present enjoyment, future usefulness and honour will all be promoted and secured.

Be not, however, the blind idolaters of genius or of science. Both may exist where not one lovely or commendable trait of character can be found. The loftiest intellect, without virtue, is but archangel ruined. In God only, do we behold the perfection of understanding, of wisdom, of knowledge, of holiness. And HE is that perfect standard which we are commanded to aim at. Religion, which requires us to be like God, constitutes the whole of moral excellence. And in proportion as religion influences the heart and life, will be the moral worth of any individual. There can be no principle of integrity, of truth, of kindness, of justice, independently of religion. No human laws, usages, institutions or opinions can, of themselves, ever render any man perfectly honest in all his dealings and transactions with his fellow-men. He has it continually in his power, *with a fair reputation too*, to mislead, deceive, defraud—and, in a thousand ways, to practise imposition. And he is continually tempted to do this, in a country where influence, office, money are the objects of universal desire and ambition, and where *success* is regarded as the criterion of merit and talent. He may not be a thief or a robber in the eye of the law, or according to the ordinary judgment of men; and yet he may be habitually more criminal than either, in the eye of infinite purity and justice; and would be so pronounced by any tribunal of perfectly honest men, who could take cognizance of all the motives, facts and circumstances. That man, who will take any undue advantage of another in a bargain, or in any mode whatever, would steal or rob just as soon, if he could do it with equal honour and safety. Nothing does, nothing can, nothing ever will restrain any mortal from any indulgence, pursuit, gain or abomination which he covets, and to which no disgrace is attached, except the fear of God—or, what is the same thing, RELIGIOUS PRINCIPLE. The most ignorant pagans,

as well as the most enlightened sages on earth, are restrained by this fear, or by this principle, whether they are conscious of it or not. I mean so far as they act from *principle* at all—and without reference to human laws or opinions. The salutary and restraining influence of religion extends, in fact, throughout the world. It is daily felt in all the relations of life. It is apparent in the whole texture and organization of human society. All the peace, comfort, virtue and felicity in the world, or which have ever been in the world, flow, and have flowed, from religion. In proportion as pure religion prevails, in the same proportion do we behold human nature approximating the purity, happiness, dignity and glory of angels. And in proportion as it is any where neglected, opposed, despised, in the same degree do vice, ignorance and misery abound. This is a *fact* obvious to every man's observation.

It is absurd for any man to pretend to reject religion altogether, because he is, in spite of himself, religious or superstitious, in some form or other, whether his views be right or wrong. It is madness and cruelty, because, were it possible for him to banish religion from our world, he would put an end to civil government, to social order and to social existence.

I shall not attempt to tell you what religion implies or inculcates; nor, of the many religions in the world, which is the best. The worst is better than none. I have no fear that any religion whatever will be preferred to the christian. I have no fear that any man, who honestly and soberly examines the records and the charter of our religion, will ever fail to acknowledge its paramount claims, and to practise, at least to approve, its precepts. And this is all that I now urge. Study the Bible faithfully and prayerfully, and you will learn what true religion is. All who do this, with a proper temper and spirit, will agree in essential points of doctrine, as well as in the essential rules of conduct. All who diligently study the Bible—from the Roman Catholic to the Quaker—will think and act alike in all things which are important, and they will never contend about unimportant forms or questions. Were the Bible resorted to for our theology and our ethics, instead of human teachers or

systems, all bigotry, fanaticism, uncharitableness and persecution would disappear from the christian world. Ignorance of the Bible is the prolific source, not only of error and superstition, but of all that demon spirit of party and sectarianism which rages among those who profess the same faith, and which keeps asunder brethren of the same family.

It assuredly ill becomes those who are liberally educated to be illiberal and intolerant on the subject of religion, or to manifest illiberal hostility against it. Nor would such an anomaly ever be witnessed, were our scholars to study the Bible as carefully and profoundly as they study, or profess to study human science and philosophy. Simply as an integral part of a liberal education, it demands the most thorough investigation. What right have men to dispute and dogmatize about religion, when, in truth, they know little or nothing of the Bible, which alone can teach it? Who is the self-sufficient bigot, that deals out anathemas against all who do not adopt the same peculiar phraseology and the same ceremonial with himself? Who is the sneering captious skeptic, who is ever railing at the hypocrisy, the credulity, the superstition, the weakness, or the inconsistency of christians—as if these were the genuine fruits of christianity, or constituted any part of its character? Who is it that deliberately intrenches himself within the strong holds of his own understanding, and affects to yield to the dictates and discoveries of reason, and to do homage to the dignity of human nature at the expense of revelation? Who is it that denounces the Bible as containing unintelligible mysteries and dogmas—as imposing rules and precepts too strict and severe for frail humanity—as presenting sanctions, and threatening penalties, revolting to infinite justice and goodness? They are to a man, ignorant of the Bible, and of the heavenly spirit which pervades it. They must be sent to school, before they can be reasoned with.

Happily, the reign of atheism has passed away. And the fopperies of infidelity are no longer in fashion. Men of sense are ashamed to avow the one, or to exhibit the other. Multitudes, however, at the present day,—and those too, frequently, among the most intelligent and influ-

ential members of society—appear desirous to stand on neutral ground. Not aware, perhaps, that the thing is impossible. They neither oppose nor profess the christian religion. They give themselves very little concern about the matter. They live under its general influence, and participate in its general charities, and seem to fancy themselves exempt from its more immediate and authoritative control; so long as they do not submit to the discipline of any particular church. As if it were at their option to obey or to disobey the divine command—to be religious or irreligious—to admit or reject as much or little of religion's precepts as may comport with their inclination or imaginary interest. Now, this is most egregious trifling with reason and duty—with themselves and their Maker. Young persons easily yield to these delusions, and are apt to think that religion is not designed for them, and that it ill becomes them. Or that it will render them miserable, or singular, or unfit for the business and concerns of the world. I pass, however, all this sophistry, all these prejudices, misapprehensions and difficulties, and again refer you to the Bible for instruction.

If man was made to be religious—and that he was, universal experience proves beyond the possibility of a doubt; if, without religion, he is both worthless and wretched—and that he is, the same experience as fully demonstrates; then is religion necessary, and equally necessary to all men. It is equally binding on all men—on the lawyer, the physician, the statesman, the soldier, the youthful student—as on the clergyman, the saint, or the sage of four score. It does not consist in particular acts or ceremonies, nor is it restricted, in its operations and influence, to particular times, places and occasions. It regulates the temper, reigns in the heart, and keeps alive the spirit of devotion, of purity and love, wherever we go, or whatever may be our worldly vocation. In every human pursuit or station, religion supplies the only true principle of action, and points out the only legitimate ways and means of success. Happy the man, who, in every undertaking, in every purpose, and during all his exertions and trials, can devoutly look to God for direction, for assistance, for wisdom, for a paternal blessing.

Finally, be courageous. Dare to be honest, just, magnanimous, true to your God, to your country, to yourselves, and to the world. Dare to do to others as you would have them do to you. Most men are cowards. They are afraid to speak and to act, when duty calls, and as duty requires. I recommend courage as a great and a rare virtue. Few men will suffer themselves to be called cowards; and yet they betray their cowardice by the very course they take to avenge the insult. A man may intrepidly face the cannon's mouth, and be an arrant coward after all. There is a higher, a nobler courage, than was ever displayed in the heat of battle, or on the field of carnage.

There is a moral courage, which enables a man to triumph over foes more formidable than were ever marshalled by any Cæsar. A courage which impels him to do his duty—to hold fast his integrity—to maintain a conscience void of offence toward God and toward men—at every hazard and sacrifice—in defiance of the world, and of the prince of the world. Such was the courage of Moses, of Joseph, of Daniel, of Aristides, of Phocion, of Regulus, of Paul, of Luther, of Washington. Such is the courage which sustains every good man, amidst the temptations, allurements, honours, conflicts, opposition, ridicule, malice, cruelty, persecution, which beset and threaten him at every stage of his progress through life. It is not a noisy, obtrusive, blustering, boastful courage, which pushes itself into notice when there is no real danger, but which shrinks away when the enemy is at the door. It is calm, self-possessed, meek, gentle, peaceful, unostentatious, modest, retiring; but when the fearful hour arrives, then you shall behold the majesty of genuine christian courage, in all her native energy and grandeur, breathing the spirit of angelic purity, and grasping victory from the fiery furnace or the lions' den; when not one of all the millions of this world's heroes would have ventured to share her fortune.

I fear God, and I have no other fear—is the sublimest sentiment ever felt or uttered by mortal man.

May each of you, beloved youth, living and dying, be enabled, in sincerity, before the Searcher of hearts, to exclaim,—I FEAR GOD, AND I HAVE NO OTHER FEAR.

APPENDIX.

The average number of students in the four regular classes of the university has generally been between seventy and eighty. These classes are so divided and subdivided, for the purposes of study and recitation, that every individual is enabled and constrained to advance according to his actual ability. Such a variety in their studies and pursuits is provided, as to promote cheerful exertion, without distracting or confusing the mind. There are only two vacations in the year—consisting of five and a half weeks each—the one commencing on the first Wednesday in April, and the other on the first Wednesday in October. There are no intermediate holidays: and no vacation is allowed to the Senior Class, previously to graduation, as is customary at other colleges. As there are no honours or prizes to animate a few to extraordinary efforts, and to discourage the majority altogether, so the whole are very desirous to avail themselves of every privilege up to the last moment of their collegiate life: and they find no difficulty in preparing appropriate exercises for the public Commencement.

This is believed to be the first college in the Union, and is still probably the only one, which has utterly discarded the old system of honorary premiums and distinctions, as incentives to industry and scholarship. This species of emulation and excitement is here unknown. Each individual is encouraged and assisted in making the best possible use of his time and talents; and in acquiring knowledge for its own sake and for future usefulness. At the close of each session or half year, all the classes are publicly examined on the studies of the previous session. These examinations usually occupy seven or eight days, and are conducted with such rigorous strictness and impartiality that it is impossible for ignorance or idleness to escape detection and exposure. Here is a fair opportunity for the exhibition of talent and superior scholarship, and for the attainment of whatever applause or reputation may be spontaneously conferred by those who witness their performances.* This kind and degree of stimulus is both natural and salutary, and may be felt by all. The Faculty are spared the invidious task of awarding honours or of graduating a scale of merit. No aspiring youth is impelled by the hope of a prize to undue and dangerous exertions; and none are subjected to the mortification of disappointed ambition or of an inequitable decision. This is not the place to enlarge on these topics.—But from a long experimental acquaintance with the ancient usage in other institutions, and from an eight years' trial of the present system here, I do not hesitate to give the latter a most decided preference. A much larger proportion of every class become good scholars—and much greater peace, harmony, contentment, order, industry and moral decorum prevail—than it had ever been my lot to remark at seminaries east of the mountains.

No departments, exclusively for Law, Medicine or Theology, have as yet been established. Much, however, that is usually considered as peculiar to each of these professions, is taught as part of the college course. The Trustees have wisely consulted the welfare of the great body of their fellow citizens, by making provision, in the first instance, for such instruction as would be generally beneficial. They are aware that the learned professions—at least, those of Law and Medicine—are already crowded to excess, and that the eagerness of youth to engage in them ought rather to be checked than encouraged. They are aware also, that, in proportion to the diffusion of knowledge among the people, the necessity for professional services of particular kinds will be diminished. To the farmers, therefore, they principally direct their regards. To elevate agriculture to the first rank among professions and occupations is their aim. They have already expended twenty thousand dollars in the purchase of a philosophical apparatus—a mineralogical cabinet of ten thousand specimens—a museum of natural history—and in furnishing a well constructed chemical laboratory. Besides employing able professors in every branch of physical and experimental science—so that the young farmer, even though he should not find it convenient to prosecute a regular college course, may at least become an accomplished scientific agriculturist. Here too, in like manner, the youthful mechanic, merchant or manufacturer may have the privilege of learning whatever will be advantageous to their several vocations. Youth then may be amply qualified here either to enter upon the study of a learned profession, or to engage in any useful business or employment.

It is contemplated however, in due time, and whenever the pecuniary resources of the institution will justify the measure, to establish Faculties for the learned professions.—To gentlemen who now do honour to the bar, the bench, the pulpit, and the healing art, in Tennessee, the university respectfully appeals for that generous patronage which will enable her to train up successors worthy to occupy their places, when they shall be gathered to their fathers.

*It is not to be understood that any formal opinion of the audience is expressed or publicly announced on these occasions. Each individual exercises his own judgment, and utters it when and where and in such fashion as he pleases. The students appear before the same kind of tribunal and are subjected to the same kind of award as are the lawyer and the preacher, the demagogue and the philosopher, and all other men during life.

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